

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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1865.

"Boom, cannon, boom, to all the hills and waves!
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!
Banners, adance with triumph! bend your staves!
And from every mountain peak
Let beacon fire to answering beacon speak,
Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,
And so leap on in light from sea to sea, ...
Making the earth more firm and air breathe braver.
Be proud, for she is saved and all have helped to save her!
She, that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind!
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more;
From her bold front the helm she doth unbind,
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,
And bids her navies that so lately hurled
Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,
Swimming, like birds of calm, along the un-
harmful shore.
No challenge sends she to the elder world,
That looked askance and hated; a light scorn
Plays o'er her mouth, as round her mighty knees

She calls her children back, and waits the morn
Of nobler day, enthroned between her sub-
ject seas."

—"Commemoration Ode,"
James Russell Lowell.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

1809—FEBRUARY 12—1909.

The prairies to the mountains' call,
The mountains to the sea;
From shore to shore a nation keeps
Her martyr's memory.

Though lowly born, the seal of God
Was in that rugged face;
Still from the humble Nazareths come
The saviours of the race.

With patient heart and vision clear
He wrought through trying days,—
"Malice toward none, with love for all,"
Unswerved by blame or praise.

And when the morn of Peace broke through
The battle's cloud and din,
He hailed with joy the promised land
He might not enter in.

He seemed as set by God apart,
The winepress trod alone;
Now stands he forth an uncrowned king,
A people's heart his throne.

Land of our loyal love and hope,
O Land he died to save,
Bow down, renew to-day thy vows
Beside his martyr grave!
—*Frederick L. Hosmer.*

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.

Perfect through suffering.—HEBREWS ii. 10.

Whatever theories we may hold regarding
the origin and meaning of suffering, probably
none of us disagree with the poet that

"There is some soul of goodness in things
evil,
Would men observingly distil it out."

The opposing elements of pleasure and
pain, joy and sorrow, light and shadow,
good and ill are so blended in the experience

of every person it seems almost as if we must admit that this is the natural and inevitable condition of human experience on earth. And if, "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein," what appears to us to be evil, no less than the good, is under divine control, and in the order of Providence was intended for the well-being of mankind; and therefore we ought to set ourselves earnestly and carefully to "distil" out of it the good which it contains, so as to make proper use of it in the supreme work of life,—the work of character-building. Peradventure, in doing this, we shall discover that as the blackest charcoal may be transformed into the most brilliant diamond, so the darkest evils are the material out of which the greatest good may be evolved.

This view of evil is beautifully illustrated in Longfellow's "Evangeline." You remember how the experience of the heroine of that sorrowful story was one long disappointment and grief:—

"Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,

Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the shadow."

But what sweetness of temper and strength of character were evolved out of the bitterness of trial and pain! How it drew toward her the sympathy of others, and prompted innumerable acts of kindness! And at the end, having become "perfect through sufferings," her ardent and constant affection for her lover broadened out into a passionate love for humanity, which

"Like to some odorous spices
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma."

Thus following the footsteps of the Christ, she became a help and a blessing wherever she went.

"The dying
Looked up into her face, and thought indeed, to behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles."

Submission to the will of God, trust in divine love, confidence in human sympathy, complete self-abnegation and devotion to others,—these are the fragrant qualities which were distilled out of her heart-rending experience.

This picture of life—portrayed by our "home poet" in such vivid and varied colors—is true, to a greater or less extent of every well-rounded character. Some experience of

what we carelessly call evil seems to be the necessary condition of the growth and progress of the soul. The joyousness of childhood, the lovely gayety of youth, the happy hopefulness of mature years, these are all beautiful. For strength of will, however, and faithful devotion to high ideals of truth and right, there must be the pain of strife. To reach the heights of self-reliance and self-direction one must encounter many a conflict and win many a battle.

"We rise by the things that are under our feet;

By what we have mastered of good and gain,

By the pride deposed and passion slain,
And the vanquished ill that we hourly meet."

Innocence is sweet and attractive, but has no positive quality. It lacks the staying power of patience and the inspiration of victory. Virtue, on the other hand, is the ripe fruit of triumph over temptation, of success amid difficulties, of endurance in disappointment and sorrow. If the object of life on earth were merely pleasure, innocence would be enough; but if human destiny allures us with infinite possibilities of attainment in knowledge and development in soul-power, then to become ideally perfect is the "one pearl of great price" for which we should be willing and ready to face hardship, loss, pain, and disappointment, counting it all as gain, if thereby we may at length win the crown of life.

"By the thorn-road, and none other,
Is the mount of vision won;
Tread it without shrinking, brother!
Jesus trod it,—press thou on!"

Shelley says, "Wretched men are cradled into poetry by wrong. They learn in suffering what they teach in song." Who would not gladly suffer the loneliness and home-sickness of John Howard Payne, if thereby he could give the world another poem like "Home, Sweet Home"? Was it not the struggle with poverty—together with his proud independence—that gave its freshness and strength to the verse of the Scottish ploughman, Burns, and made him the object of undying love and admiration for all English-speaking people? The inspiration of Milton was breathed into his soul when he had fallen on the evil days of blindness and poverty; and Dante's song, which lifted all poetry to a higher plane, came out of his heart as he wandered, sad and alone, an exile from his beloved city of Florence.

Some years ago I knew a man whose whole attention for over half a century was so

absorbed in the pursuit of business that there was no time for ideal thought or scientific study. Then his health failed, and afterwards he became totally blind. In this almost helpless condition he resorted to the study of Shakespeare, committing to memory many of the plays and all the sonnets. And, when he had listened to the melody of this sweet singer for a dozen years,—sitting in darkness, seeing neither the light of day, the beauty of nature, nor the familiar face of kith and kin,—and “the lofty energies of thought, the fire of poesy” had filled his heart and mind with serene contentment and a great love for truth, he told me that he would rather remain blind to the day of his death and enjoy the spiritual exaltation which the study of poetry had kindled in his soul than to recover the use of his eyes and live, as he had done before, without its divine illumination.

Maybe we see more clearly now how the God-like virtues which glorify humanity are developed amid the afflictions of ill-health, restricted circumstances, and hard conflict. As the grape must be crushed before the wine flows forth, so the human heart must feel the heavy weight of suffering before the soul becomes capable of reaching its highest attainments and doing its best work. Thus the wonderful inspiration of Jewish literature rose to its sublimest grandeur after the people had passed through the awful experiences of national disaster which culminated in the Babylonian captivity. So, too, it was the heat of bigotry and the sharpness of persecution that followed the Apostle Paul through all his missionary efforts which gave his Epistles their divinely spiritual force and immortal vigor. “In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings,” there came into his mighty soul the insight and faith that have made him for nearly twenty centuries the teacher of the religious leaders of the civilized world, with ever-increasing power and expanding influence.—*Alexander T. Bowser.*

THE STILL HOUR.

The wind that blows can never kill
 The tree God plants;
 It bloweth east, it bloweth west,
 The tender leaves have little rest,
 But any wind that blows is best;
 The tree God plants
 Strikes deeper root, grows higher still,
 Spreads wider boughs, for God's good will
 Meets all its wants.

There is no frost hath power to blight
 The tree God shields;
 The roots are warm beneath soft snows,
 And when spring comes it surely knows,
 And every bud to blossom grows.
 The tree God shields
 Grows on apace by day and night,
 Till, sweet to taste and fair to sight,
 Its fruit it yields.

There is no storm has power to blast
 The tree God knows;
 No thunderbolt nor beating rain,
 Nor lightning flash nor hurricane,
 When they are spent it doth remain.
 The tree God knows
 Through every tempest standeth fast,
 And from its first day to its last
 Still fairer grows.

If in the soul's still garden-place
 A seed God sows—
 A little seed—it soon will grow
 And far and near all men will know,
 For heavenly lands He bids it blow,
 A seed God sows,
 And up it springs by day and night;
 Through life, through death, it groweth right,
 Forever grows.

—*The Observer.*

Every day we live we face a world of need and tragedy. Every day our sympathies should lead us towards that world to serve it; no day escape without its hand-lift to some little one; no hour without its heart-lift to some brother lacking cheer. In this earth-home, where some of us have so much and some have less than little, these are but human rules.

When, over and over again, evil is seen to be at last evolving good, assurance grows in us that good will always and everywhere prevail; and that the seeming exceptions will, when truly understood, prove subtler, vaster instances of the fact that the world's disorder is order-in-the-making.

Difficulty which nerves our will; disappointment which teaches patience; suffering which gives us sympathies; sorrow which transmutes itself to trusts such as we never had before; and all these hard experiences of strain and pain and loss and death working together in us to wake a sense of deathlessness,—the sense of trust in an eternal righteousness! Think, think, of it!

Illumination must begin in the soul: the face catches glory only from that side. And spirit's beauty, that which the work and wear and pain of life do so much to render exquisite, is the only beauty that outlasts the work and wear and pain.—*William C. Gannett.*

THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS.

When the first number of the *Chimney-Corner* appeared, the snow lay white on the ground, the buds on the trees were closed and frozen, and beneath the hard, frost-bound soil lay buried the last year's flower roots, waiting for a resurrection.

So in our hearts it was winter,—a winter of patient suffering and expectancy,—a winter of suppressed sobs, of inward bleedings,—a cold, choked, compressed anguish of endurance, for how long and how much God only could tell us.

The first paper of the *Chimney-Corner*, as was most meet and fitting, was given to those homes made sacred and venerable by the cross of martyrdom,—by the chrism of a great sorrow. That *Chimney-Corner* made bright by home firelight seemed a fitting place for a solemn act of reverent sympathy for the homes by whose darkness our homes had been preserved bright, by whose emptiness our homes had been kept full, by whose losses our homes had been enriched; and so we ventured with trembling to utter these words of sympathy and cheer to those whom God had chosen to this great sacrifice of sorrow.

The winter months passed with silent footsteps, spring returned, and the sun, with ever-waxing power, unsealed the snowy sepulchre of buds and leaves. Birds reappeared, brooks were unchained, flowers filled every desolate dell with blossoms and perfume. And with returning spring, in like manner, the chill frost of our fears and of our dangers melted before the breath of the Lord. The great war, which lay like a mountain of ice upon our hearts, suddenly dissolved and was gone. The fears of the past were as a dream when one awaketh, and now we scarce realize our deliverance. A thousand hopes are springing up everywhere, like spring flowers in the forest. All is hopefulness, all is bewildering joy.

But this our joy has been ordained to be changed into a wail of sorrow. The kind, hard hand that held the helm so steadily in the desperate tossings of the storm has been stricken down, just as we entered port: the fatherly heart that bore all our sorrows

can take no earthly part in our joys. His were the cares, the watchings, the toils, the agonies, of a nation in mortal struggle; and God, looking down, was so well pleased with his humble faithfulness, his patient continuance in well-doing, that earthly rewards and honors seemed all too poor for him, so he reached down and took him to immortal glories. "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

Henceforth the place of Abraham Lincoln is first among the noble army of martyrs who have given their blood to the cause of human freedom. The eyes are yet too dim with tears that would seek calmly to trace out his place in history. He has been a marvel and a phenomenon among statesmen, a new kind of ruler in the earth. There has been something even unearthly about his extreme unselfishness, his utter want of personal ambition, personal self-valuation, personal feeling.

The most unsparing criticism, denunciation, and ridicule never moved him to a single bitter expression, never seemed to awaken in him a single bitter thought. The most exultant hour of party victory brought no exultation to him. He accepted power, not as an honor, but as a responsibility; and when, after a severe struggle, that power came a second time into his hands, there was something preternatural in the calmness of his acceptance of it. The first impulse seemed to be a disclaimer of all triumph over the party that had strained their utmost to push him from his seat, and then a sober girding up of his loins to go on with the work to which he was appointed. His last inaugural was characterized by a tone so peculiarly solemn and free from earthly passion, that it seems to us now, who look back on it in the light of what has followed, as if his soul had already parted from earthly things, and felt the powers of the world to come. It was not the formal state paper of the chief of a party in an hour of victory, so much as the solemn soliloquy of a great soul reviewing its course under a vast responsibility, and appealing from all earthly judgments to the tribunal of Infinite Justice. It was the solemn clearing of his soul for the great sacrament of Death, and the words that he quoted in it with such thrilling power were those of the adoring spirits that veil their faces before the throne,—“Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!”

Among the rich treasures which this bitter struggle has brought to our country, not the least is the moral wealth which has come to us in the memory of our martyrs. Thousands of men, women, and children too,

in this great conflict, have "endured tortures, not accepting deliverance," counting not their lives dear unto them in the holy cause; and they have done this as understandingly and thoughtfully as the first Christians who sealed their witness with their blood.

Let us in our hour of deliverance and victory record the solemn vow, that our right hand shall forget her cunning before we forget them and their sufferings, that our tongue shall cleave to the roof of our mouth if we remember them not above our chief joy.

THE STORY OF ONE OF THE MARTYRS.

In the town of Andover, Mass., a boy of sixteen, named Walter Raymond, enlisted among our volunteers. He was under the prescribed age, but his eager zeal led him to follow the footsteps of an elder brother who had already enlisted; and the father of the boy, though these two were all the sons he had, instead of availing himself of his legal right to withdraw him, indorsed the act in the following letter addressed to his captain:—

ANDOVER, MASS., August 15, 1862.

Captain Hunt,—My eldest son has enlisted in your company. I send you his younger brother. He is, and always has been, in perfect health, of more than the ordinary power of endurance, honest, truthful, and courageous. I doubt not you will find him, on trial, all you can ask, except his age, and that, I am sorry to say, is only sixteen, yet if our country needs his service, take him.

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL RAYMOND.

The boy went forth to real service, and to successive battles at Kingston, at Whitehall, and at Goldsborough, and in all this did his duty bravely and faithfully. He met the temptations and dangers of a soldier's life with the pure-hearted firmness of a Christian child, neither afraid nor ashamed to remember his baptismal vows, his Sunday-school teachings, and his mother's wishes.

He had passed his promise to his mother against drinking and smoking, and held it with a simple, childlike steadiness. When in the midst of malarious swamps, physicians and officers advised the use of tobacco. The boy writes to his mother, "A great many have begun to smoke, but I shall not do it without your permission, though I think it does a great deal of good."

In his leisure hours he was found in his tent reading; and before battle he prepared his soul with the beautiful psalms and collects for the day, as appointed by his

church, and writes with simplicity to his friends,—

"I prayed God that he would watch over me, and, if I fell, receive my soul in heaven; and I also prayed that I might not forget the cause I was fighting for, and turn my back in fear."

After nine months' service he returned with a soldier's experience, though with a frame weakened by sickness in a malarious region. But no sooner did health and strength return than he again enlisted in the Massachusetts cavalry service, and passed many months of constant activity and adventure, being in some severe skirmishes and battles with that portion of Sheridan's troops who approached nearest to Richmond, getting within a mile and a half of the city. At the close of this raid, so hard had been the service that only thirty horses were left out of seventy-four in his company, and Walter and two others were the sole survivors among eight who occupied the same tent.

On the 16th of August, Walter was taken prisoner in a skirmish; and from the time that this news reached his parents until the 18th of the following March they could ascertain nothing of his fate. A general exchange of prisoners having been then effected, they learned that he had died on Christmas Day in Salisbury Prison, of hardship and privation.

What these hardships were is, alas! easy to be known from those too well-authenticated accounts published by our government of the treatment experienced by our soldiers in the Southern prisons.

Robbed of clothing, of money, of the soldier's best friend, his sheltering blanket, herded in shivering nakedness on the bare ground; deprived of every implement by which men of energy and spirit had soon bettered their lot; forbidden to cut in adjacent forests branches for shelter or fuel to cook their coarse food; fed on a pint of corn-and-cob meal per day, with some slight addition of molasses or rancid meat; denied all mental resources, all letters from home, all writing to friends,—these men were cut off from the land of the living, while yet they lived; they were made to dwell in darkness as those that have been long dead.

By such slow, lingering tortures, such weary, wasting anguish and sickness of body and soul, it was the policy of the Confederate government either to wring from them an abjuration of their country, or by slow and steady draining away of the vital forces to render them forever unfit to serve in her armies.

Walter's constitution bore four months of this usage when death came to his release. A fellow-sufferer, who was with him in his last hours, brought the account to his parents.

Through all his terrible privations, even, lingering pains of slow starvation, Walter preserved his steady simplicity, his faith in God, and unswerving fidelity to the cause for which he was suffering.

When the rebels had kept the prisoners fasting for days, and then brought in delicacies to tempt their appetite, hoping thereby to induce them to desert their flag, he only answered, "I would rather be carried out in that dead-cart!"

When told by some that he must steal from his fellow-sufferers, as many did, in order to relieve the pangs of hunger, he answered, "No, I was not brought up to that!" And so, when his weakened system would no longer receive the cobmeal which was his principal allowance, he set his face calmly towards death. He grew gradually weaker and weaker, and fainter and fainter, and at last disease of the lungs set in, and it became apparent that the end was at hand.

On Christmas Day, while thousands among us were bowing in our garlanded churches or surrounding festive tables, this young martyr lay on the cold, damp ground, watched over by his destitute friends, who sought to soothe his last hours with such scanty comforts as their utter poverty afforded; raising his head on the block of wood which was his only pillow, and moistening his brow and lips with water, while his life ebbed slowly away, until about two o'clock, when he suddenly roused himself, stretched out his hand, and, drawing to him his dearest friend among those around him, said in a strong, clear voice,—

"I am going to die. Go tell my father I am ready to die, for I die for God and my country," and, looking up with a triumphant smile, he passed to the reward of the faithful.—*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

The Christian hope gives peace and power by restoring the broken proportions of the mind, and tranquillizes the restlessness of a spirit unconsciously "cabined, cribbed, confined." It is this truthfulness to our best and deepest nature—the power we receive from it, the *quiet* we find in it—that gives to the Christian estimate of life its most irresistible persuasion upon the heart. . . . Whoever will reverence the glimpses of his better mind shall find them multiplied; and, even while they pass, they may be rich in revelations.—*Martineau.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club, to be printed there.

OFFERS.

1. "Black Beauty" is offered by Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

For the following, address Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.: "London Letters," 2 vols., G. W. Smalley; "History of Greece," 5 vols., Curtins; "In the Trades, the Tropics, and the Roaring Forties," Lady Brassey; "The Vultures," Merriman; "At Sundown," Whittier; "The Golden Journey, and Other Verses," "Life of Goldsmith," Irving; "Lessons in Vocal Expression," Curry; "Classics in Vocal Expression," Curry.

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I wish to thank any who have remembered me in the past, and to tell you how much I enjoy reading the little paper which I receive regularly. I have a family of four children, aged one to seven years, and a brother fourteen, and appreciate any reading, living in a lonely place. My brother would like "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and I should be glad of old magazines. Mrs. Etta A. Raynor, Speonk, Long Island, Box 31, New York.

2. Mrs. H. M. Jackson, R. F. D. 4, Whitaker's, North Carolina, will be glad of good reading, which she will pass on.

3. I am rather tardy in expressing my thanks for your generous response to my request for our Christmas tree. I received a lot of nice things. We had such a nice tree, and the children enjoyed it so much. I am so grateful to you all for your kindness. I wish I could have answered every one personally, but it was impossible. I am kept very busy doing the work for ten, with

the little help my children can give me after school hours. All that do not go to school are kept busy in the field, so you see it is but little help I have, and I am not strong, and have had some sickness since Christmas. If any of you have reading matter, books, papers, or magazines, we are sadly in need for our library. If it is old, it will be all right for us. We have a good school of eighty-five scholars, and also a good Sunday-school. We shall be so thankful for anything. We are preparing to have an exhibition the last of April. Shall be so grateful for anything to help us. Simple plays and recitations are what we need. We cannot have anything that requires many different costumes, or anything that is costly, as we are all poor and cannot have any but the simplest things. I sincerely thank you all for your kindness in the past, and with many good wishes for you all. (Mrs.) J. Porter, Doerun, Colquitt County, Georgia, R. F. D. 3.

4. Mrs. Dainie Trammel, Athens, Texas, R. R. 1, will appreciate any books or papers. She has a husband and a little girl.

5. The *Cheerful Letter* is full of helpful articles. We enjoy every number. We should be glad to receive old *Floral* or *Household* magazines. We do not care how old they are, just so they are readable, and we will pass them on to others. Mrs. Sarah Gilbert, Atlantic, Iowa, 203 East Ninth Street.

6. Lue Sims, Jamestown, Tennessee, a crippled girl, asks for reading to cheer some of her lonely hours.

7. Mrs. Mattie Furgson, Mallacoff, Texas, a widow with six children, will be very glad of any reading.

8. Please send me "Audrey," by Mary Johnston; "A Jolly Summer"; "The Little Minister," by Barrie; "Flower Fables," by L. M. Alcott; "Longfellow's Poems"; "Worcester's Comprehensive Dictionary"; "Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene," Cutter. Mrs. L. L. Draughon, Whitaker's, North Carolina.

9. Miss Annie L. Phillips, Spilman, Mason County, West Virginia, asks particularly for: "The Awakening of Helena Ritchie," "Concerning Sir Richard Calmady," "The House of Mirth," "The Wayfarers," "Wuthering Heights," "East Lynne."

10. Rev. W. R. Chapman, Bealeton, Vir-

ginia, is anxious to receive a Hebrew Old Testament. He is trying to learn Hebrew, and it would help him very much if he could have an interlined copy.

11. Mrs. E. Peel, Palmyra, North Carolina, asks for books or magazines for students in a country school.

12. I should be so grateful for anything you would send me to read. We have four little fatherless grandchildren to support, and would like to get something that would interest them. Will pass any books or papers sent me on to the neighbors. Mrs. J. V. Ware, Sandidges, Virginia, Route 1.

13. Miss Emily A. Downing, Newington, New Hampshire, is very anxious for the Boston *Globe* sent regularly.

14. Mrs. Susie M. Turner, Dodson, Virginia, will be glad of reading, as none has been received for a long time.

CORRECTION.

The address of Mrs. R. B. Ware is Lowesville, Amherst County, Virginia, instead of Lanesville, as given in March *Cheerful Letter*.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

THE UNTRUTHFUL CHILD.

"I'm in despair about Helen," said Mrs. Vaughn to her sister, "for she is growing very untruthful, and I have tried every means in my power to break her of it."

"As what, for instance?" asked her sister.

"Well, she has been put to bed for it, had her mouth washed with soap and water, deprived of her dessert, and everything I could think of except whipping. You know, I'm no believer in that."

"Doesn't seem to have any effect?" inquired the other.

"Not in the least. At first I thought it came from fear of punishment: so I would talk to her very gently, when I knew she had done wrong, and was telling a falsehood to cover it. I told her if she would only tell me the truth, I wouldn't punish her at all. I'm sure I don't know what to do, for she is such a good child in every respect; but this untruthfulness makes me sick at heart."

"Oh, nonsense!" returned the other; "she'll outgrow it. Most children fib. Still," she added, "if from my limited kindergarten experience you'll let me try my hand, perhaps I can do something." Mrs. Vaughn looked at her dubiously.

"You know, Nell," she said, doubtfully, "I don't approve of spanking or anything harsh."

Her sister laughed merrily. "Spanking!" she echoed. "Shades of the immortal Froebel! Why, you don't dare mention the word in a modern kindergarten. Mind you, I said I'd try. I didn't promise for sure that I could accomplish anything."

It happened not long afterward that the young person under discussion entered the room where her mother and aunt were sitting, with suspicious fruit stains about her mouth.

"What are you eating, dear?" asked the mother. "A plum?"

"Yes, mamma," admitted the child.

"Where did you get it?"

"I picked it up in the street," was the calm reply.

"Helen, dear," said her mother, gravely. "I fear my little girl isn't telling me the truth. Didn't you get it from the kitchen?"

"No," persisted the child, "I picked it up in the street."

"I'm sorry, dear," said the mother, "but I must ask Maggie if you didn't take it from the kitchen table."

"Oh, don't ask her!" exclaimed the child, suddenly, "for I forgot. I—I guess I did take it from the kitchen."

"Aunt Nell," asked Mrs. Vaughn, sadly, turning to her sister, "what would you do with a little girl who couldn't tell the truth?"

Aunt Nell laid her hand on Helen's shoulder.

"Helen," she said, gravely, "I'm going to ask your mamma not to punish you this time." The child's face brightened. "But," she added. "I'm going to let you punish yourself. We won't wash your mouth, nor stand you in the corner, nor make you do without dessert, but we won't believe what you say for a week. It isn't your mamma that's punishing you, it's yourself. You've shown us that we can't take your word for anything. So we can't believe anything you tell us till you show us that you really can tell the truth."

Helen, who had been apprehensive of a soapy wash-cloth, or a dessertless dinner, was perceptibly relieved, and hurried away to play. The week that followed was one that she never forgot. It was in vain that she begged Maggie for a cookie on the plea of being hungry. "I don't believe you," was the curt rejoinder. It was useless to entreat her aunt to come and see the new family of kittens in the barn. "I don't believe there are any there," was the careless reply. Even her father caught the spirit of scepticism, while, when her mother doubted

the existence of a toothache, Helen felt that her cup was indeed overflowing. The week of disbelief in her word had accomplished what other punishments had failed to do, and at the end of seven days she threw her arms about her mother's neck.

"Oh, please believe me now, mamma," she pleaded, "for I'll never tell a story again if you and papa and auntie'll only believe me." And she kept her word.—*Elsie Duncan Yale, in Presbyterian Banner.*

[The Editor would be glad to receive letters or articles on this important and difficult question, *i.e.*, "How to teach a child, not naturally truthful, to speak the truth." Was the method pursued by the mother and aunt in this case the best one? Is it not open to some objections?]

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE.*

"Hush! 'tis he!
My Oriole, my glance of summer fire
Is come at last."

—*Lowell.*

We, who punctuate our reading of Nature's calendar with bird and flower rather than by the artificial figures of the almanac, give to March the bluebird and song sparrow, the redwing and the return of the swallows to April, and to May and June (for so does the rush of growth and migration flood these months that they should be taken as a continuous sixty-day jubilee), the wood thrush, catbird, and oriole.

In one reading of the matter the Baltimore oriole should be first mentioned; for his voice is that of the bugler that heralds actual spring, the long-expected, long-delayed mellow period, distinct from the almanac spring, that, when it once comes to us of the middle and north country, is quickly absorbed by the ardor of summer herself. Also is this oriole the gloriously illuminated initial letter wrought in ruddy gold and black pigments, heading the chapter that records the season; and, when we see him high in a tree against a light tracery of fresh foliage, we know in very truth that not only is winter over, that the treacherous snow squalls of April are past, but that May is working day and night to complete the task allotted.

For as the Indian waited for the blooming

* Teachers, students, and other persons may obtain additional copies of this and other Educational Leaflets, with illustrations and outlines, issued by the National Association of Audubon Societies, by applying to the office, No. 141 Broadway, New York City.

of the dogwood, *Cornus florida*, before planting his maize, so does the prudent gardener wait for the first call of the oriole before she trusts her cellar-wintered geraniums and lemon balms once more to the care of mother earth.

This oriole has history blended with his name; for it is said that George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, tired and discouraged by many of the troubles of his Newfound-land colony, in visiting the Virginia settlement in 1628, explored the waters of the Chesapeake, where he found the shores and woods alive with birds, and, conspicuous among them, vast flocks of orioles. These so pleased him that he took their colors for his own and they ever afterward bore his name—a fair exchange.

The Baltimore oriole comes of a parti-colored American family—*Icteridæ*—that to the eye of the uninitiated at least would appear to be a hybrid clan drawn from all quarters of the bird world. Yet it is typically American, even in this variety; for what other race would have the temerity to harbor the bobolink, orchard and Baltimore orioles, redwing, meadowlark, various grackles, together with the vagrant cowbird, in the branches of the same family tree?

One of the many welcome facts concerning the oriole is the ease with which he is identified; and I say *he* advisedly, for his more industrious half, who is the expert weaver of the pair, is much the more sombre of hue. In early May, or even as late as the middle of the month in backward seasons, you will hear a half-militant, half-complaining note from the high tree branches. As you go out to find its origin, it will be repeated, and then a flash of flame and black will shoot across the range of vision toward another tree, and the bird, chiding and complaining, begin a minute search along the smaller twigs for insects. This is the oriole, *Icterus galbula*, as he first appears in full spring array, his head, throat, and top of back and wings black, except a few margins and quills that are white-edged. The breast and under parts, lower part of back, and lesser wing-coverts are orange flame, while his tail is partly black and partly orange.

Two other tree-top birds that arrive at about the same time, one to remain and one to pass on, wear somewhat the same combination of red and black—the redbstart and the Blackburnian warbler. But, besides being much smaller birds, they both belong to the pretty tribe of warblers that,

with a few notable exceptions, such as the chat and water-thrushes, should be more properly called lispers, and not to be confused with the clear-toned oriole.

Once the female oriole arrives, usually several days after the male, his complaining call, "Will you? Will you really truly?" gradually lessens; and after a few weeks, when nest-building begins, it quite disappears, or rather is appropriated by the songless female, who, while she weaves the nest, is encouraged by the clarion song of her mate. The plumage of the female is brown and gray blended with orange above, the head, back, and throat being mottled with black, while the under parts are a dull orange, with little of the flaming tints of the male.

Though the oriole exposes himself more freely to view than most of our highly colored birds, and in fact seems to regard his gift of beauty anything but seriously, he takes no chances, however, in the locating of his nest, which is not only from twenty feet above the ground upward, but is suspended from a forked branch that is at once tough yet so slender that no marauding cat would dare venture to it. This pensile nest is diligently woven of grasses, twine, vegetable fibres, horsehair, bits of worsted, or anything manageable, and varies much in size and shape, as if the matter of individual taste entered somewhat into the matter. It has been fairly well proven that location enters largely into this matter, and that nests in wild regions, where birds of prey, etc., abound, are smaller at the top and have a more decided neck than those in the trees of home lawns and orchards. Of the many nests that I have found and handled or else observed closely with a glass, the majority have been quite open at the top and the only one with a narrow and funnel-like opening came from a way-side elm on the edge of a dense wood.

The female seems to be weaver-in-chief, using both claw and bill, though I have seen the male carry her material. It is asserted that orioles will weave gayly-colored worsteds into their nests. This I very much doubt, or, if they do, I believe it is for lack of something more suitable. I have repeatedly fastened vari-colored bunches of soft linen twine, carpet thread, flosses, and the like under the bark of trees frequented by orioles, and, with one exception, it has been the more sombre tints that were selected.

In the exceptional case a long thread of

scarlet linen floss was taken and woven into the nest for about half its length, the remainder hanging down; but, on resuming my watch the next day, I found that the weaver had left the half-finished task and crossed the lawn to another tree. Whether it was owing to the presence of red squirrels close by, or that the red thread had been a subject for domestic criticism and dissension, we may not know.

Be this as it may, in spite of the bright hues of the parent birds and the hanging shape of the nest that is never concealed by a branch upon which it is saddled, like the home of so many birds, an oriole's nest is exceedingly difficult to locate unless one has noticed the trips to and fro in the building process; but once the half-dozen white, darkly etched and spotted eggs it contains hatch out, the vociferous youngsters at once call attention to the spot and make their whereabouts known, in spite of sky cradle and carefully adjusted leaf umbrellas.

If their parents bring them food, they squeal (yes, that is the only word for it); if they are left alone, they do likewise. Their baby voices can be heard above the wind, and it is only either at night or during a heavy shower, when a parent would naturally be supposed to be upon the nest, that they are silent.

As an adult, the oriole lives on rather a mixed diet and has a great love of honey; but, of course, as a parent he is, with his sharp beak, a great provider of animal food for his home, and to his credit must be placed a vast number of injurious tree-top insects that escape the notice of less agile birds.

Complaints are frequently heard of his propensity for opening pods and eating young peas, piercing the throats of trumpet-shaped flowers for the honey, and, in the autumn before the southward migration, siphoning grape and plum juice by means of this same slender-pointed bill.

Personally, I have never lost peas through his appetite for green vegetables, though I have had the entire floral output of an old trumpet vine riddled, bud and blossom; and I have often stood and scolded them from under the boughs of a Spitzenburg apple-tree, amid the blossoms of which they were rummaging (perhaps for insects), but also scattering the rosy blossoms right and left with torn and bruised petals. Powell, in the *Independent*, writes feelingly of this trait of the oriole, thus:—

"An oriole is like a golden shuttle in the foliage of the trees, but he is the incarnation of mischief. That is just the word for it.

If there is anything possible to be destroyed, the orioles like to tear it up.

"He wastes a lot of string in building his nest. He is pulling off apple blossoms now, possibly eating a few petals. By and by he will pick holes in bushels of grapes, and in plum season he will let the wasps and hornets into the heart of every Golden Abundance plum on your favorite tree. Yet the saucy scamp is so beautiful that he is tolerated—and he does kill an enormous lot of insects. There is a swinging nest just over there above the blackberry bushes. It is wonderfully woven and is a cradle as well as a house. I should like to have been brought up in such a homestead."

It seems as if the oriole must be the descendant of one of the brilliant birds that inhabited North America in by-gone days of tropic heat, and that has stayed on from a matter of hereditary association; for in the nesting season it is to be found from Florida and Texas up to New Brunswick and the Saskatchewan country and westward to the Rockies, beyond which this type is replaced by Bullock's oriole, of much similar coloring save that it has more orange on the sides of the head and the white wing patch is larger.

But, however much the Baltimore oriole loves his native land, the climate and the exigencies of travel make his stay in it brief; for he does not appear until there is some protection of foliage, and he starts southward toward his winter home in Central and South America often before a single leaf has fallen.—*Mabel Osgood Wright, in Bird-lore.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

A ZIGZAG.

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1. A pavilion of canvas.
 2. The superficial contest of any figure.
 3. Inlets from the sea.
 4. Synonym for moisture.
 5. Children's playthings.
 6. To pull.
 7. Synonym for lazy.
 8. To send forth.
 9. A metal.
 10. Found at the seashore.
- My whole is a mountain in New Hampshire.

II.

BURIED CITIES.

1. Thou art sour, O Mediaval Jecken!
2. Dip a rising sun in butter and toast him.
3. O gambolling kitten, there's a rat;
O gambolling kitten, catch that rat!
4. Alas! Alek! the venison is tough to-night.
5. Nine homesick puppies, in nine vehicles,
straying sadly down the rode to Pekin.

III.

SOBRIQUETS.

Who were known by the following:—

1. The Wise Fool.
2. Cœur de Lion.
3. First Gentleman of Europe.
4. Defender of the Faith.
5. Sailor King.

IV.

NAMES OF TREES.

Say, which is the handsomest of all trees
That ever braved the cruel wintry breeze,
Which ever lovely to our eyes appears,
And knows no change through all the rolling
years?
When this tree's name you shall have fairly
guessed,
Say, which appears to you the ugliest?
And this, I think, you'll easily explain,
Because the answer is so very plain.
When these are known, I pray you name the
one
Of all the autumn trees most meddlesome,
Which sets all classes blindly by the ears,
However friendly to them it appears.
Next tell me which defies old ocean's flood,
And by whose might its leaves are best with-
stood?
Inform me next which will bid you rove?
Which live? And which all modern maidens
love?

—Young Days.

Answers to Puzzles in April Number.

I.—NOVEL PUZZLE.—1. Fight, Night. 2. Runt, Aunt. 3. Aisle, Misle. 4. Nick, Kick. 5. Cage, Rage. 6. Ill, All. 7. Sack, Pack. Francis Parkman.

II. AN EVENING WITH AUDUBON. 1. Quail. 2. Rook. 3. Dove. 4. Crane. 5. Crow. 6. Kite. 7. Jay. 8. Lark. 9. Hawk. 10. Duck.

III. CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS.—1. Henry M. Stanley. 2. Walter Scott. 3. Charles Dudley Warner. 4. Ralph Waldo Emerson. 5. George Washington.

IV. ANOTHER SEA TRIP.—1. Pharisee. 2. Obduracy. 3. Pharmacy. 4. Policy. 5. Regency. 6. Vacancy. 7. Vagrancy.

V. A DIAMOND.—

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The wiser we grow, therefore, and the better we become, the more surely do we understand the holy joy of being alive, inasmuch as life even now brings to all the faithful the true reward for all their efforts.

Life may seem nothing rare to one who idly, selfishly, squanders its precious hours; but to every diligent man life is a treasure beyond estimation, and such natures find in the opportunities of each new day the ample reward for faithfulness in the day before. The true scholar's reward does not lie in the fame he may or may not receive for his book, nor in the financial returns it secures. His joy is in the doing of the work itself, in the eager search for truth, in the knowledge he is acquiring, in the actual labor of his literary art. The artist Turner cared so little for public praise and for the selling of his famous works that when he died there were in his possession hundreds of his paintings, which by a little worldly wisdom he might have turned into gold. His joy was in the art itself, in the painting of pictures; that is, in life rather than in common rewards. Life was his crown, as is that of every worker who honors his occupation. Activity calls for more and larger activity to be its sweet reward. "When I have achieved something," prays every great soul, "mock me with no crowns of laurel or gold. Grant me a crown of life, something more to achieve, time and courage for mightier deeds."

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

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1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discourage—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

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